

Amendments to the Claims:

Please amend the claims as shown. Applicants reserve the right to pursue any cancelled claims at a later date.

1 – 5 (cancelled)

6. (new) A distribution device for distributing short messages to an IP-compatible terminal, comprising:

a receiving apparatus, which receives a short message to be sent to a subscriber;

an interrogation device in communication with the receiving apparatus which, after the arrival of the short message for the subscriber, asks a registration device for the status of the subscriber whether the subscriber is online; and

a control device, which evaluates the interrogation result and forwards the short message to the subscriber or buffers the message for sending at a later time, depending on the status of the subscriber from interrogation device.

7. (new) The distribution device as claimed in claim 6, wherein the control device forwards the short message to the subscriber over an IP network if the results of the interrogation device reveals that the subscriber is online.

8. (new) The distribution device as claimed in claim 6, wherein the control device buffers the short message for the subscriber if the interrogation device reveals through the registration device that the subscriber is not online and has no access to a circuit switched network, the control device then submits a new request to the registration device through the interrogation device at regular intervals and forwards the short message to the subscriber as soon as the interrogation device reveals that the subscriber is now online.

9. (new) The distribution device as claimed in claim 6, wherein the control device forwards the short message to the subscriber via a circuit switched network if said interrogation reveals that the subscriber is not online.

10. (new) A registration device which registers the status of a subscriber in a network, connected to a distribution device, comprising:

an interface connected to the distribution device for distribution of a short message to an IP-compatible terminal, wherein the interface responds to the request of the distribution device for the status of the network access of the subscriber.

11. (new) The registration device according to claim 10, wherein the subscriber is connected to the system via a set top box communication device generally utilized for media viewing.

12. (new) The registration device according to claim 10, wherein the message is a short message containing text.

13. (new) The registration device according to claim 10, wherein the message is a multimedia message containing images or video or both.

14 (new) A system for ensuring that short messages are not lost in a communication system and allowing the receiving of a short text message to a subscriber comprising:

a registration device that registers whether the subscriber is on-line via a set top box; and
a distribution center that communicates with the registration device when a message is being received for the subscriber to determine if the subscriber is on-line and if the subscriber is on-line then the message is sent to the subscriber through an IP network.

15. (new) The system according to claim 14, wherein the distribution center if through the registration device determines the subscriber is not on-line then the distribution center buffers the short message until the subscriber is on-line.

16. (new) The system according to claim 14, wherein the distribution center a regular intervals communicates with the registration device to determine of the subscriber is on-line in order to send the message to the subscriber via the IP network when the subscriber is on-line.

17. (new) The system according to claim 14, wherein the distribution center further comprises:

a receiving apparatus that receives a message to be sent to the subscriber; and

an interrogation device for communicating with the registration device to determine whether the subscriber is online or not.

18. (new) The system according to claim 14, wherein the distribution center through the registration device receives an IP address for the subscriber and send the message via a packet switched IP network to the subscriber.

19. (new) The system according to claim 14, wherein the subscriber is connected to the system via a set top box communication device generally utilized for media viewing.

20. (new) The system according to claim 14, wherein the message is a short message containing text.

21. (new) The system according to claim 14, wherein the message is a multimedia message containing images or video or both.